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# Protesters against nuclear arms rebut charge of Communist ploy



## WESTERN EUROPE IN TRANSITION

Last in a series about the countries President Ronald Reagan will visit in Europe.

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LONDON - Msgr. Bruce Kent, an urbane, pink-cheeked cleric, is the type you'd expect to see greeting parishioners at tea.

To coworkers in his scruffy, North London office, he's "Bruce." A World War II tank commander who's now a Roman Catholic priest, Msgr. Kent says: "I don't use the religious title here."

"Here" is headquarters of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), the spearhead of Britain's growing peace movement. To Winston Churchill, name-ke grandson of the wartime prime minister and now Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party spokesman on defense, Msgr. Kent's CND is "a sinister and sustained campaign, inspired and encouraged by Moscow."

Msgr. Kent is a controversial figure in England, frequently derided in the conservative press as a feather-brained left-winger.

Msgr. Kent scoffs at the pinko-priest label; those who portray the peace activists as Communist dupes or worse try to create the impression this is a great Communist plot. They assumed

With the the European peace movement mobilizing for a summer offensive, there will be a fresh round of charges about whether the peace protesters are playing into Moscow's hands.

Last December, President Ronald Reagan charged that Europe's massive peace marches "are all sponsored by a thing called the World Peace Council, which is bought and paid for by the Soviet Union." The American Friends Service Committee replied that Reagan was wrong - not about the World Peace Council - but because many sponsoring organizations represented moderate or centrist religious and political groups.

The World Peace Council is, indeed, a Communist organization. Two years ago, the House committee on intelligence heard testimony from John McMahon, a career CIA official, recently named No. 2 man in the agency, that the council is "a political action tool in support of Soviet foreign policy goals and military strategy" operating in 130 countries.

But a month's worth of interviews with peace movement leaders and politicians in Great Britain, France, Italy and West Germany, the four countries Reagan will visit, shows that the fear of nuclear war - and a new-found desire to impress these fears on governments - exist in a far broader spectrum of people than those who support Communist aims.

In the United States, 133 of 280 active Roman Catholic bishops have endorsed a call for a freeze on nuclear weapons by Washington and Moscow. Such an embrace by so many leading churchmen

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, seeking to explain strains in the Atlantic alliance, wrote recently: "Historically, surrender was considered worse than resistance. For many, the cataclysmic consequences of nuclear war have reversed that motivation. To them, nothing seems worse than a nuclear holocaust."

It is the widespread fear of holocaust and equally widespread mistrust of governments in power that have turned groups like the CND into a powerful, broad-based movement. The religious imprimatur from American bishops is giving the peace movement more legitimacy in Europe, where the movement sagged after Poland fell under martial law.

CND's grimy headquarters is an old, three-story building on a side street in a rundown neighborhood. Wall posters say things like "No More Hiroshimas" and stress militantly peaceful themes. The youthful staff, 12 of them fulltime, is organizing a big rally for June 6, the day before Reagan arrives in London. Msgr. Kent says there is only a casual tie-in with other leaders of the European peace movement: "Our contacts are all terribly informal and personal."

Msgr. Kent was heartened while in America recently to learn first-hand of the widespread support for the US peace movement from Catholic bishops and leading Protestant clergymen.

"We've nothing like the Catholic bishops," he said. "I actually thought that in the States, [the peace movement] is more hopeful, more in the middle ground. The